



30 Bank Street
PO Box 350
New Britain, CT 06050-0350
06051 for 30 Bank Street
(860)223-4400
fax (860)223-4488

Testimony of Regina G. Dowling, Esq.
Co-chair, Connecticut Bar Association Paralegals Committee
House Bill 6477, An Act Concerning the Unauthorized Practice of Law by Notaries Public and the
Outsourcing of the Drafting, Review or Analysis of Legal Documents
Judiciary Committee
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Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, and members of the Judiciary Committee thank you for the opportunity to appear and comment on **House Bill 6477, An Act Concerning the Unauthorized Practice of Law by Notaries Public and the Outsourcing of the Drafting, Review or Analysis of Legal Documents**. My name is Regina Dowling and I am a co-chair of the Connecticut Bar Association's Paralegals Committee. I am also the Program Director of the Paralegal Studies program at the University of Hartford. The Paralegals Committee opposes House Bill 6477 Section 2 (a). HB 6477 Section 2(a), if passed, will detrimentally impact the legal profession in the State of Connecticut in several ways.

By the language of Section 2(a), the paralegal profession will cease to exist. Paralegals provide an important service to attorneys and law firms' clients in the State of Connecticut. They enable attorneys to provide a high level of service to the client at a reasonable fee. HB 6477 Section 2(a) seeks to make it the unauthorized practice of law for any person who is not admitted to practice as an attorney in the State of Connecticut to draft, review, analyze, draft a legal document, or conduct research on a legal issue. Paralegals routinely draft, review, and analyze legal documents in the scope of their employment. They do so under the direct supervision of an attorney. Paralegals do not provide direct legal services to the client; paralegals provide attorneys with a high level of skill and support in the representation of a client. Should HB 6477 become law, each time a paralegal would undertake a task assigned by an attorney, that paralegal would commit the unauthorized practice of law.

Permitting only attorneys who are admitted to practice in Connecticut to draft, review, analyze legal documents, or conduct research on a legal issue for clients in the State will serve to substantially raise the cost of the delivery of legal services to the public. It will also contribute substantially to the delivery of inferior legal services to the public. The inability to have a law school student or recent law school graduate, or a paralegal draft, review, analyze legal documents, or conduct legal research would require the attorney to provide all such services to all clients. The work load for attorneys would increase substantially, the quality of the work may decrease, and the cost to the client would dramatically increase.

For the foregoing reasons, the Paralegals Committee of the CBA opposes House Bill 6477 Section 2(a) and urges the committee to not favorably report the bill.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.